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797 The attitude of the community towards the family or the
•798 individual who has become Christian is a complex of tolerance
621 and incomprehension. Becoming a Christian is not in itself an
626 offence for which there is an established penalty in tribal custom: the village council does not act and there is no formal outcasting of the offender from the community as there is, for example, when a Santal has married outside the tribe. The denial of tobacco and drinking water, two of the common manifestations of "separateness", are rarely used in the area, though sometimes found elsewhere. Thus, in the early days of the mission at Benagaria, Skrefsrud found that Christian converts were being cut off from social intercourse; by a process that sounds very like intimidation he invited all the leading Santals of the neighbourhood to a feast with the converts and informed them that having eaten with the converts they must now receive them back into the tribe.[1] Where social ostracism does occur it does not last long. There is rarely any need for a family to change their residence on becoming Christian so far as their fellow villagers are concerned, though some Christians do so because there are occasions when an isolated Christian family is put to grave inconvenience. This is particularly the case when a death occurs, for [764] the non-Christians will have nothing whatever to do with the disposal of a corpse after the strange manner of the Christians. Such predicaments occur only when the degree of isolation is great. With the individual convert it happens sometimes that he has to eat his meals separately from the rest of the family [152] for a time. It is served to him out in the courtyard rather than on the verandah or in the house, but this signifies contempt rather than any other emotion and it does not last. Sometimes the members of the family show signs of genuine grief. There is no [582] reason, from a Santal point of view, why non-Christian Santals should not marry Christians, although such marriages are not popular. The chief discouragement to them and the only discipline against them is exercised from the Christian side. And while relations between a convert and his kinsfolk and distant relatives do become strained, the old friendly relations are often resumed and it is customary for Christians to pay visits to the homes of non-Christian relations and *vice versa*. No attempt is made to dispossess or disinherit Christians who continue to enjoy the fruits of their toil in the fields.

797 This tolerance of Christians in the midst alongside the dis-
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[1] My authority for this statement is a small life of Skrefsrud in Santali, published by the Santal Mission of the Northern Churches.

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approval of much in the Christian message is perhaps due to the fact that Santal society is not sufficiently aware of danger. In the area, very few conversions of village officials have taken place. During the first decade of the present century a *parganath* with his family became Christian, and the reports of the time speak of hoping that his example would be followed by many others. In fact the Church has made practically no progress in that *pargana* since; a brother of the convert became *parganath* in his place. In a more recent example which occured in 1940 in the Midnapore district, a baptized *parganath* retained his office, but his example in becoming Christian was not followed. The only cases of village headman and village priest accepting Baptism have occurred in one village where the mission had become landlord. The large majority of converts have come from the rank and file of Santal society.

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Individual religious experience plays a comparatively insignificant part in the first approach of the Santal to the Christian faith, though it is a strong motive in isolated cases. Dosoroth Hāsdāk', baptized in 1916 at about the age of thirty-five, was such a case. During the years when the mission was in its infancy he was growing up in a small village eighteen miles from Sarenga. He was sent to a village school by his father, and his first knowledge of Christianity was gained when he sat for the final examination, and this knowledge supplied him with a faith at a later crisis in his life to take the place of his former belief in the spirits. Here are his own words: "From that time (when he had gone to sit for an examination) I used to question in my mind the customs of the Santals. For a long time I went on drinking and dancing and I used to reverence the spirits in tree stumps, stones and trees, but all the time with growing dissatisfaction. As my sins increased, the Heavenly Father led me into more and more temptation and trouble. Two boys and two girls died at childbirth, and believing only in the spirits I ran to all the *ojhas* round about, but none could do anything. Then my wife and I talked together and decided that as the spirits had never been able to do anything we would no longer heed them but depend on God alone. So we tried to learn more about Him, and after awhile we heard of the mission at Sarenga. I went there a few times and got understanding; then I was baptized when Spencer Sahib paid his first visit to Samadi. From that time, believing in the One God and by His mercy, all my children and all of us have remained well."[1] Dosoroth died in 1940, being

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[1] Quoted from a MS. in my possession written by Dosoroth at my request.